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CHURCHILL DOWNS OPENS 11-DAY SEPTEMBER MEET FRIDAY AT 12:45 P.M.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2016) – Racing on the Kentucky circuit shifts to Churchill Downs on Friday (Sept. 16) with a 10-race program at 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern) as the famed Louisville racetrack opens its fourth September Meet for an action-packed 11-date run through Sunday, Oct. 2.

Inaugurated in 2013 by request from Kentucky horsemen, the three-week September Meet provides area horse owners, trainers and jockeys a viable racing option to compete for ample prize money mainly on dirt during an important time on the racing calendar in advance of the popular Keeneland and Churchill Downs fall meets.

A total of 105 horses and 14 also-eligible entries were drawn Tuesday for Friday's opener, which is an 11.7% increase from the 94 entries on opening day a year ago and up 36.4% compared to the 77 entered in 2014.

Friday's featured eighth race at 4:18 p.m. is a \$47,000 allowance/optional claiming event (\$62,500 claiming tag) over 1 1/16 miles that attracted an ultra-competitive field of 10 older horses that includes that includes \$536,601-earner **Abraham**, the 6-year-old who is owned by **Maggi Moss** and trained by **Chris Richard**, who has saddled 11 winners in 30 starts (36.7%) in his career at the September Meet.

The 10-race kickoff card also includes another allowance, a \$45,000 second-level seven-furlong race for fillies and mares, and two maiden special weights. A one-mile maiden race for 2-year-old fillies (Race 6 at 3:16 p.m.) lured 13 entries, including **Winchell Thoroughbreds LLC's** homebred **Untapped**, an unraced full-sister to 2014 Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) winner **Untapable** and a half-sister to Grade I-winner and 2010 Kentucky Derby third **Paddy O'Prado**.

Meanwhile, three-time Kentucky Derby winner **Calvin Borel**, who unexpectedly announced his retirement in late March only to return to the saddle five months later on Aug. 27, will make his first appearance of the year at Churchill Downs. Borel will have two chances to collect his first comeback win in Races 5 (**Flying Frank**) and 9 (**Makin' Sense**).

Horsemen can compete for \$4.125 million in prize money offered in Director of Racing **Ben Huffman's** 109-race September Meet condition book, which averages to \$375,000 per day. Last year, \$3,605,992 was paid to horsemen over 11 dates and 109 races for a daily average of \$327,817.

The September Meet's nine-race stakes schedule cumulatively worth \$1,125,000 kicks off Saturday with a stakes quartet, including two important 1 1/16-mile fixtures for juveniles that could produce starters in next spring's \$2 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands (Grade I) and \$1 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI). The \$150,000 **Iroquois Presented by TwinSpires.com** (GIII) kicks off the 35-race "Road to the Kentucky Derby" series (Top 4 Points: 10-4-2-1), while the \$200,000 **Pocahontas Presented by TwinSpires.com** (GII) starts the 30-race "Road to the Kentucky Oaks" (Top 4 Points: 10-4-2-1). Also, both races are Breeders' Cup "Win and You're In" Challenge events, which means the winners will receive automatic berths in the starting gate for their respective Breeders' Cup races on Nov. 5 at Santa Anita.

Saturday's stakes foursome is completed by a pair of stakes for fillies and mares, the \$100,000 **Locust Grove Presented by TwinSpires.com** (GIII) over 1 1/16 miles and \$100,000 Open Mind at six furlongs.

The \$100,000 **Dogwood Presented by GE Appliances** for 3-year-old fillies at seven furlongs and \$100,000 **President of the UAE Cup Sponsored by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council** (GI) for Arabians 3-years-old and up at 1 1/4 miles will be the featured events on Saturday, Sept. 24 – the lone Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and Woodford Reserve night racing event of the September Meet.

A stakes tripleheader topped by the \$175,000 **Lukas Classic** – a 1 1/8-mile listed race designed as a prep for the 1 1/4-mile Breeders' Cup Classic and late November's Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare (GI) – will be showcased on Saturday, Oct. 1. The race shares the spotlight with top milers in the \$100,000 **Ack Ack Handicap Presented by TwinSpires.com** (GIII) and 3-year-olds in the \$100,000 Jefferson Cup (GIII) at 1 1/8 miles on the Matt Winn Turf Course – the only stakes race on grass during the meet.

North America's 2015 Champion Sprinter **Runhappy** is among the top horses that will target stakes races at Churchill Downs' September Meet, and he's eyeing the closing weekend Ack Ack with the hope of stretching out his brilliant speed.

SATURDAY'S FIRST RACE MOVED TO 2:30 P.M.; LOUISVILLE/FLORIDA STATE ATTENDEES TO RECEIVE FREE ADMISSION – With a nationally-televised ACC showdown between the 10th-ranked **University of Louisville** football team and second-ranked **Florida State** at nearby Papa John's Cardinal Stadium on Saturday at noon, Central Avenue is certain to be bustling with activity this weekend.

Friday's 12:45 p.m. September Meet opener at Churchill Downs could draw plenty of out-of-town visitors, and track officials proactively moved back Saturday's post time from 12:45 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. so fans could enjoy the best of both worlds and to help ease area traffic.

Those who attend the big game are invited to visit Churchill Downs afterward free of charge on Saturday simply by showing their ticket stub. Eleven races, including four stakes events, are scheduled Saturday and the last race is scheduled for 7:29 p.m.

ESPN's College GameDay will visit Louisville for the first time for Saturday's game, and there will be some elements from Churchill Downs fused into the broadcast.

SEPTEMBER MEET AT A GLANCE – Churchill Downs Racetrack opens the 2016 September Meet on Friday, Sept. 16 with a 10-race program that begins at 12:45 p.m. ET. This will mark the fourth consecutive year that the home of the Kentucky Derby has hosted a race meet in the month September. The boutique 11-day meet will be staged over three weekends through Sunday, Oct. 2 with racing on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. **Travis Stone** will describe the racing action with **Joe Kristufek** serving as a paddock analysis. General admission is \$3 (\$1 for seniors age 60 and up) and \$10 for Downs After Dark on Saturday, Sept. 24. Reserved box seats are \$10 (\$25 for Downs After Dark) and indoor dining options are \$38 (\$70 for Downs After Dark). Children 12 and under are admitted free when accompanied by an adult (Downs After Dark policy: no one under the age of 18 will be admitted to the track unless they are accompanied by a parent or responsible adult). Free seating is available over a first-come, first-serve basis in Sections 115-117. Parking is free in the Longfield Avenue lot (Gates 10 & 12). Valet parking is \$10.

SEPTEMBER MEET STAKES – Churchill Downs' 11-day September Meet will showcase nine stakes races cumulatively worth \$1.125 million over a trio of Saturdays:

- **Saturday, Sept. 17:** the Grade II, \$200,000 Pocahontas Presented by TwinSpires.com (2-year-old fillies at 1 1/16 miles); the Grade III, \$150,000 Iroquois Presented by TwinSpires.com (2-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles); the Grade III, \$100,000 Locust Grove Presented by TwinSpires.com (fillies and mares at 1 1/16 miles); and the \$100,000 Open Mind (fillies and mares at six furlongs).
- **Saturday, Sept. 24:** the listed, \$100,000 Dogwood Presented by GE Appliances (3-year-old fillies at seven furlongs); and the Grade I, \$100,000 President of the UAE Cup Sponsored by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council (Arabians 3-years-old and up at 1 1/4 miles).
- **Saturday, Oct. 1:** the listed, \$175,000 Lukas Classic (3-year-olds and up at 1 1/8 miles); the Grade III, \$100,000 Ack Ack Presented by TwinSpires.com (3-year-olds and up at one mile); and the listed, \$100,000 Jefferson Cup (3-year-olds at 1 1/8 miles on turf).

KNOWN PROBABLE IROQUOIS STARTERS: Probable entrants, according to stakes coordinator **Dan Bork**, for Saturday's 35th running of the \$150,000 Iroquois Presented by TwinSpires.com (GIII) for 2-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles (with trainer): **Hard to Be Good** (Anthony Granitz), **Honor Thy Father** (Kenny McPeck), **Just Move On** (Pat Byrne), **Lookin At Lee** (Steve Asmussen), **Not This Time** (Dale Romans), **Singing Bullet** (Romans) and **Skinflint** (Dane Kobiskie). Possible: **Tiz Trevor** (Jason Cook). Entries will be taken Wednesday morning.

KNOWN PROBABLE POCAHONTAS STARTERS: Probable entrants, according to stakes coordinator Dan Bork, for Saturday's 48th running of the \$200,000 Pocahontas Presented by TwinSpires.com (GII) for 2-year-old fillies at 1 1/16 miles (with trainer): **Bling On the Music** (J.R. Caldwell), **Daddys Lil Darling** (Kenny McPeck), **Dream Dancing** (Mark Casse), **Ever So Clever** (Steve Asmussen), **Gone Till Dawn** (Ashley Dinanathsingh), **Imluckygirl** (James Spicer), **Jet Away Sue** (Randy Morse), **Jordan's Henny** (Mike Tomlinson) and **Sully's Dream** (Kellyn Gorder). Possible: **Awesome Express** (Neil Howard) and **Dial Me** (Wayne Lukas). Entries will be taken Wednesday morning.

KNOWN PROBABLE LOCUST GROVE STARTERS: Possible entrants for Saturday's 33rd running of the \$100,000 Locust Grove Presented by TwinSpires.com (GIII) for fillies and mares at 1 1/16 miles (with trainer): **Ahh Chocolate** (Neil Howard), **Engaginglee** (Dale Romans), **Innovative Idea** (Eoin Harty), **Romantic Vision** (Rusty Arnold) and **Sweetgrass** (Ian Wilkes). Possible: **Miss Pink Diva** (Buff Bradley). Entries will be taken Wednesday morning.

KNOWN PROBABLE OPEN MIND STARTERS: Possible entrants for Saturday's eight running of the \$100,000 Open Mind for fillies and mares at six furlongs (with trainer): **Athena** (Helen Pitts-Blasi), **Fioretti** (Anthony Hamilton Jr.), **I'm a Looker** (Pat Dupuy), **Kathballu** (Kenny McPeck), **Mayla** (Bret Calhoun), **Puntsville** (Michele Boyce) and **Unbridledexplosion** (Ian Wilkes). Entries will be taken Wednesday morning.

FAMILY ADVENTURE DAY IS SUNDAY – Presented by **Kroger** and in partnership with **Kosair Children's Hospital**, **Family Adventure Day** at Churchill Downs will be held Sunday (Sept. 18) – first Sunday of the September Meet.

Families are encouraged to bring the kids to Churchill Downs for a day of racing and family activities including pony rides, inflatables, petting zoo, stick horse races in the Paddock, face painting and more. New activities for this event include Sportsdrome Speedway race cars and drivers; the Air 60 police helicopter and the Belle of Louisville float. Kosair Children's Hospital activities will feature the Caring for Your Child's Mind, Body and Spirit; Mighty Titans obstacle course; kids' yoga; and a "just for kids" craft activity.

Tickets for adults and children age 3 and up are just \$8 when purchased online in advance at ChurchillDowns.com, and include unlimited access to all kid-friendly activities through 5 p.m. Churchill Downs is also offering a Family Four Pack that includes four Family Adventure Day tickets, four family meals in the Family Adventure Day area and two racing programs for only \$44.

'INSIDE CHURCHILL DOWNS' TO AIR SUNDAYS AT 9 A.M. ON 93.9 THE VILLE – "Inside Churchill Downs," co-hosted by Churchill Downs Racetrack's **John Asher**, **Kevin Kerstein** and **Darren Rogers**, is moving to Sundays from 9-10 a.m. (all times Eastern) and will air on **93.9 The Ville**.

The one-hour program, which typically features multiple guests, will air every Sunday through the conclusion of the Fall Meet on Nov. 27. The move from Saturday to Sunday was necessitated to avoid college football programming conflicts on both 93.9 The Ville and its sister station ESPN 680.

Those outside the Louisville radio market can listen live online at <http://www.espnlouisville.com/>. Podcasts of the shows also will be available on the website.

DOWNS AFTER DARK SET FOR SATURDAY, SEPT. 24; BEN SOLLEE, LINKIN' BRIDGE TO PERFORM – **Bourbon, Bets and Bow Ties** is the theme for **Downs After Dark** Presented by **Stella Artois** and **Woodford Reserve** on Saturday, Sept. 24 – the only nighttime racing event scheduled during the 11-day September Meet.

The evening is an opportunity to celebrate the best of the south including bourbon, Thoroughbred racing and fashion. Track officials plan to infuse a contemporary, yet timeless Southern style into everything from food to music and décor.

An outstanding doubleheader of musical entertainment on the Plaza stage will be provided by Kentucky-born cellist and composer **Ben Sollee** (7:15-9 p.m.) and the incredibly-popular Louisville group **Linkin' Bridge** (9:30-10:45 p.m.).

Other event highlights include special bourbon-infused dishes from local food trucks and craft cocktails from the pop-up Plaza Bourbon Bar, and interaction with famous prohibition-era Kentuckians courtesy of the **Frazier History Museum**.

Trouble with bow ties? Have your bow tie tied for you at the **vineyard vines** pop-up shop with bow tie tying stations in the Plaza. Guests can bring their own or shop for the latest vineyard vines bow tie designs and purchase one on-site.

Attendees also can get personalized wagering advice at the Wagering 101 tent near the Plaza and enter Bet or No Bet presented by **Thorntons** for the chance to place a \$1,000 win bet on Races 6-9.

On the racetrack, 3-year-old fillies will sprint seven furlongs in the 41st running of the \$100,000 Dogwood Presented by GE Appliances (Grade III) and Arabian 3-year-olds and up will race 1 ¼ miles in the \$100,000 President of the UAE Cup Sponsored by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council (GI)

Admission gates open at 5 p.m. and the first of 11 races is 6 p.m. General admission is \$10 and reserved seat packages start at \$25. The final race of the evening is scheduled for 11:10 p.m. but the party continues until midnight.

Party For A Purpose will be held in the Grandstand Area to benefit the **Forecastle Foundation**. Attendees will be able to enjoy the sounds of local **DJ Matt Anthony** and internationally acclaimed **Red Bull Thre3style World Champion DJ Hedspin**, craft cocktails and a dance floor that overlooks the track. VIP Cabanna Access includes a full premium bar at \$59 and General Party Access is \$15.

Also available is the **Original Makers Club Courtyard Lounge**, where guests can enjoy the Sport of Kings trackside from the Section 119 Courtyard, live music, regionally-inspired small-plate style fare, beer, wine and Woodford Reserve cocktails. The ticket price is \$150 and is limited to 275 guests.

TWILIGHT THURSDAYS FEATURING \$1 BEER ON SEPT. 22 AND SEPT. 29 – Fans can enjoy Thoroughbred racing and \$1 beers after work in the Paddock Plaza on Thursdays, Sept. 22 and Sept. 29, during the September Meet. Gates open at 4 p.m. (all times Eastern) and the first race is 5 p.m. on "Twilight Thursdays," which feature \$1 beer, live music (**Josh Kauffman** on Sept. 22 and **BoogieJuice** on Sept. 29), food trucks (**Red Top Gourmet Hot Dogs**, **Holy Mole**, **Mark's Feed Store**, **502 Café** and **Pollo**), and Betting 101 tips from resident handicappers in Churchill Downs' Plaza from 5-8 p.m.

WHO'S THE CHAMP? HANDICAPPING CONTEST ON SEPT. 25, OCT. 2 – The popular “Who’s the Champ? Handicapping Contest” will be held on Sundays, Sept. 25 and Oct. 2 during Churchill Downs’ September Meet. The contests will take place in Churchill Downs’ ITW area on the second floor of the Clubhouse. Bettors can enter for \$35 (\$30 for TSC Elite members) and are required to make mythical \$2 Win/Place bets on Races 3-8. The highest bankroll will win a \$1,000 cash voucher. Second place is a \$500 voucher and third is a \$250 voucher. Registration takes place Sunday between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. at the top of the Gate 17 escalators.

SEPTEMBER MEET POST TIMES –

Day 1 of 11 – Friday, Sept. 16 (Opening Day): 10 races from 12:45-5:18 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-9:30 p.m.)
Day 2 of 11 – Saturday, Sept. 17: 11 races from 2:30-7:29 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-9:30 p.m.)
Day 3 of 11 – Sunday, Sept. 18 (Family Adventure Day): 10 races from 12:45-5:18 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-8 p.m.)
Day 4 of 11 – Thursday, Sept. 22 (Twilight Thursday): 8 races from 5-8:23 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-8:30 p.m.)
Day 5 of 11 – Friday, Sept. 23: 10 races from 12:45-5:18 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-9:30 p.m.)
Day 6 of 11 – Saturday, Sept. 24 (Downs After Dark): 11 races from 6-11:10 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-11:15 p.m.)
Day 7 of 11 – Sunday, Sept. 25: 10 races from 12:45-5:18 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-8 p.m.)
Day 8 of 11 – Thursday, Sept. 29 (Twilight Thursday): 8 races from 5-8:23 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-8:30 p.m.)
Day 9 of 11 – Friday, Sept. 30: 10 races from 12:45-5:18 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-9:30 p.m.)
Day 10 of 11 – Saturday, Oct. 1: 11 races from 12:45-5:50 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-9:30 p.m.)
Day 11 of 11 – Sunday, Oct. 2 (Closing Day): 10 races from 12:45-5:18 p.m. (Simulcast Wagering, 12-8 p.m.)

MILESTONE WATCH – At age 55, veteran jockey **Jon Court**, a regular at Churchill Downs since the 1982 Fall Meet, is nearing 4,000 career wins. He’d become only the 72nd jockey in history to reach the milestone. ... **Brian Hernandez Jr.** needs four wins to become the 20th jockey to win 400 races at Churchill Downs ... Jockey **Shaun Bridgmohan** is two wins away from 50 Churchill Downs stakes victories. ... Trainer **Paul McGee** is eight wins shy of his 1,000th career victory.

STATISTICALLY SPEAKING – Four jockeys in the September Meet riding colony are ranked in the Top 20 on the 2016 national money-won list:

5. Florent Geroux (158-for-784, \$12.8 million)
11. Julien Leparoux (105-for-591, \$8.1 million)
16. Ricardo Santana Jr. (124-for-758, \$6.7 million)
17. Corey Lanerie (143-for-865, \$6.5 million)

Seven trainers stabled at Churchill Downs for the September Meet are ranked in the Top 20 on the 2016 national money-won list:

3. Mark Casse (152-for-940, \$11.3 million)
4. Steve Asmussen (219-for-1,105, \$11.1 million)
5. Mike Maker (148-for-758, \$8.5 million)
10. Bill Mott (63-for-486, \$6.3 million)
15. Brad Cox (98-for-353, \$4.4 million)
17. Keith Desormeaux (23-for-164, \$3.9 million)
20. Dale Romans (42-for-330, \$3.4 million)

Ten owners that regularly start horses at Churchill Downs are ranked in the Top 20 on the 2016 national money-won list:

2. Ken and Sarah Ramsey (85-for-421, \$5.3 million)
4. Klaravich Stables Inc. and William H. Lawrence (36-for-181, \$3.4 million)
5. Stonestreet Stables LLC (20-for-79, \$2.8 million)
6. Midwest Thoroughbreds Inc. (100-for-469, \$2.8 million)
9. Charles Fipke (34-for-163, \$2.4 million)
11. Gary and Mary West (33-for-125, \$2.2 million)
13. Conquest Stables LLC (36-for-210, \$2.0 million)
17. WinStar Farm LLC (25-for-89, \$1.9 million)
18. Shadwell Stable (16-for-140, \$1.9 million)
19. John C. Oxley (26-for-138, \$1.8 million)

LEADING SEPTEMBER MEET TRAINERS BY WINS (2013-15): Trainer **Steve Asmussen** has tied for leading trainer at each of Churchill Downs' three previous September meets. He shared the meet-leading crown with **Dale Romans** in 2013 and 2015 with eight and six wins, respectively, and tied with **Wayne Catalano** in 2014 with seven wins each. The following is a look at the winningest trainers during the September Meet since its 2013 inception: Steve Asmussen (21-for-81, 25.9%), Dale Romans (20-for-102, 19.6%), **Mike Maker** (14-for-69, 20.3%), **Chris Richard** (11-for-30, 36.7%), **Brad Cox** (11-for-38, 28.9%), Wayne Catalano (11-for-55, 20.0%), **Eddie Kenneally** (9-for-35, 25.7%), **Wesley Ward** (8-for-19, 42.1%), **Rusty Arnold** (8-for-27, 29.6%), **Steve Margolis** (8-for-30, 26.7%), **Kenny McPeck** (7-for-40, 17.5%), **Ian Wilkes** (7-for-55, 12.7%), **Randy Morse** (6-for-25, 24.0%), **Brendan Walsh** (5-for-21, 23.8%), **Tom Amoss** (5-for-37, 13.5%), **Angel Montano Sr.** (4-for-17, 23.5%), **Mark Casse** (4-for-19, 21.1%), **Jimmy Baker** (4-for-22, 18.2%), **Mike Tomlinson** (4-for-23, 17.4%), **Neil Howard** (4-for-26, 15.4%), **Gary Hartlage** (4-for-33, 12.1%), **Dallas Stewart** (4-for-34, 11.8%), **Bret Calhoun** (4-for-38, 10.5%), **Ron Moquett** (4-for-39, 10.3%), **Kellyn Gorder** (4-for-41, 9.8%), **D. Wayne Lukas** (4-for-42, 9.5%) and **Buff Bradley** (4-for-52, 7.7%).

DOWN THE STRETCH – The Kentucky Derby Presentation Stand, often called the “Cupola” or “Pagoda,” is undergoing a restoration that will be complete prior to the start of the Fall Meet. First constructed in 1938, every Kentucky Derby winner since that time has been led to the infield presentation area to be honored. ... New trainers with stalls in the Churchill Downs barn area for September are **Keith Desormeaux** (23-for-164, \$3,869,062 in 2016), **Chris Block** (24-for-139, \$827,213), **Jon Cowan** (6-for-61, \$225,654) and **Liam Benson** (2-for-16, \$82,805). ... Desormeaux has Preakness Stakes winner **Exaggerator** stable here to prepare for the \$1 million Pennsylvania Derby (GII) at Parx on Sept. 24. The Kentucky Derby runner-up is scheduled to breeze Saturday. ... Churchill Downs has the capability to receive text messages from fans who want to report unruly fan behavior or any other issue without leaving their seat. Text “HORSE” with the issue and location to 69050. A Churchill Downs staff member will personally look into the issue and work to ensure the matter is addressed.

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